pipeline imports of natural gas from the Middle East.

Myth about Iodised Salt

*415. SHRI N. GIRIPRASAD :
Shri CHATURANAN MISHRA :
Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item appearing in the 'Feedback' column of the Life Line page of Indian Express, dated August 7, 1993 under the caption "The Myth about Iodised Salt" wherein it is stated hat iodine added to common salt disappears when the iodised salt is exposed to a warm, humid climate and the remaining iodine is lost during cooking;

(b) if so, what is the use of launching the compulsory iodisation programme to fight the goitre and related diseases; and

(c) what is Government's reaction to this observation ?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) to (c) The Government is aware of the report, which does not appear to be based on scientific facts.

In our country, potassium Iodate is used for iodising salt which is quite stable in our climatic conditions. Studies conducted have shown that though there is some marginal loss of iodine due to exposure to sun light as well as for climatic conditions and during cooking, but the same is well taken care of by the fact that at the production level the iodine content is prescribed at 30 ppm while at the consumption level the requirement is 15 ppm only. Moreover, in the National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme, emphasis is given on proper packaging of salt to minimise the possible loss of iodine.

Special Police Care to Senior Citizens

*416. SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the news item appearing in the Times of India, dated 7th June, 1993 regarding 400 old men and women called 'Senior Citizen' of the West Police District of Delhi who got themselves enrolled for special police care and protection at a function held recently in Rajdhani College, Raja Garden, Delhi; if so, what are the details of the scheme;

(b) whether the same could be extended to the senior citizens living in other parts of the country;

(c) what are the features of this facility; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. B. CHAVAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) A scheme for special police care and protection to senior citizens of Delhi has been in existence since 1990. The news item refers to the scheme formulated by the West Police District which envisages that the Honorary Special Police Officers of the area and the Beat Constables would take care of senior citizens and meet them at least once a day.

As regards extension of the scheme to senior citizens living in other parts of the country, a view has to taken by the respective State Governments.

Functioning of Computerised Online System

*417. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it has come to the notice of Government that computerised online system has started functioning in the Institute of Health and Family Welfare at Munirka, New Delhi for admission of all India Undergraduate students, as a result of CBSE pre-medical entrance examination, to MBBS/BDS Courses in accordance with the recent decision of the Supreme Court;

(b) if so, what is the number of candidates who got admission into the 15 per cent quota for the students for the above mentioned courses;

(c) whether DGHS is responsible for the allotment of seats for this purpose;

(d) whether this work has been entrusted to National Informatics Centre, Planning Commission to design and implement at online computerised allotment and display system; and

(e) whether publicity has been given to this effect; if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 1561 candidates were given admission against the All India 15% Quota.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The notification regarding allotment by personal appearance was issued in various News papers all over India through DAVP which appeared on 21st July, 1993.

Hardship Faced by the Poor Patients in AIIMS for Temporary Stay

*418. SHRI GAYA SINGH :
SHRI N. E. BALARAM :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the hardships being faced by the poor patients who have been referred for treatment to AIIMS from far away states and who are forced to chose the pavements outside the AIIMS as their temporary homes and do some odd jobs for their living; and

(b) if so, whether Government have any proposal to make some arrangement for the temporary stay of such people in Delhi near the AIIMS if necessary in consultation with the Delhi Administration ?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) and (b) There is already one Vishram Sadan situated in the Campus of AIIMS providing accommodation as under :

Dormitories	—	80 beds
Single rooms	—	36 beds
Suits-7	—	14 beds

Suitable land for extension of this building has been earmarked and the work will be taken up depending on the availability of funds.

Public Heath Centresin M. P.

*419. SHRI TRILOK NATH CHATURVEDI :

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Public Health Centres in Madhya Pradesh and the number of Centres where a doctor has not been available for the last six months;

(b) the percentage of rural population which has been actually using the facility of PHCs;

(c) the percentage of budget of PHC spent on salaries and the percentage spent on medicines and providing other facilities to the patients; and

(d) whether Government have formulated any scheme to associate non-Government voluntary associations, gram panchayats and women's organisations to revitalise the functioning of PHCs ?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANARANAND) : (a) to (d) As per the information received from the State Government, there are 1841 Primary Health Centres. 242 Primary Health Centres have no doctor for the last six months.

A sizeable percentage of the rural population utilises the services of these PHCs.

82.4% of the budget of PHC is spent on the salaries of the staff and about 17.6% is spent on medicines and other services to the patients.

Non-Government voluntary organisations and members of the gram panchayats and womens' organisations are lending their support in extending health and family welfare services to the rural population.

Railway Accidents

*420. SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI :
SHRI PASUMPON THA KIRUTTINAN :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of persons killed and seriously wounded due to railway accidents during the last three years;

(b) the number of persons who died due to railway accidents while travelling on the roofs of the passenger trains during the last three years;

(c) the number of cases in which compensation has been paid to the next of kin of those died and to the wounded and the number of cases where compensation in respect of the dead and the wounded has not been paid for more than six months and the reasons for delay; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the railway administration to curb travelling on the roof of the trains and whether any responsibility is fixed on the guards of the trains concerned therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF) : (a) The casualty